



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Governance and Audit Committee**

24 September 2024

Councillor Philip Knowles, Cabinet  
Member for Corporate Governance and  
Licensing

### **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review Letter 2023-24**

#### **Report Author**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To report the content of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2023-24.

#### **Recommendations**

**That the Committee notes the content of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2023-24.**

#### **Decision Information**

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

High performing Council

Which wards are impacted?

All

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

1.1 There are no specific finance or procurement implications arising from this report.

*Completed by: Richard Wyles, Chief Finance Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

1.2 There are no specific legal and governance implications arising from this report.

*Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer*

## **2. Background to the Report**

2.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is responsible for investigating complaints about Councils, all adult social care providers and some other organisations providing local public services.

2.2 The Ombudsman would expect a complainant to have gone through all of the stages of an organisation's own complaints process before receiving a complaint on any matter.

2.3 Any complaint to the Ombudsman must be about something it has authority to investigate and in most cases a complainant should:

- Complain to the Ombudsman within 12 months of becoming aware of the matter
- Have been directly affected by the matter and suffered a 'personal injustice'

2.4 This report sets out the content of the Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2023/24 for South Kesteven District Council.

## **3. Key Considerations**

3.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter covers a twelve-month period up to 31 March 2024. This is attached to the report at **Appendix A**.

- 3.2 The Annual Review Letter focuses on three key areas that help to assess the Council's commitment to put things right when they go wrong. These are:
- Complaints upheld
  - Compliance with recommendations
  - Satisfactory remedy provided by the Authority
- 3.3 19 complaints were considered by the Ombudsman during the period of the Annual Review Letter, broken down into the following areas:
- Planning & Development – 6
  - Environmental Services and Public Protection & Regulation – 5
  - Housing – 4
  - Corporate & Other Services – 2
  - Benefits & Tax – 1
  - Highways & Transport – 1
- 3.4 Of these 19 complaints, the Annual Review Letter reports that for South Kesteven District Council:
- The Ombudsman carried out **three** detailed investigations during the period
  - The Ombudsman upheld **one** complaint following a detailed investigation during this period and was not satisfied the Council had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint was received by the Ombudsman
  - The Ombudsman was satisfied the Council had successfully implemented its recommendations relating to the case it upheld
- 3.5 It should be noted that the Council's number of upheld decisions equates to 0.7 per 100,000 residents, with the average for authorities of this type being 1.2 per 100,000 residents.
- 3.6 The complaint upheld by the Ombudsman following a detailed investigation related to the Council's failure to deal with breaches of planning control that affected the complainant's home. The Ombudsman found fault in the Council's enforcement investigation. The Council agreed to implement a number of actions, as set out in the decision notice which can be viewed via the following link:
- [23 006 419 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)
- 3.7 Further statistical information for South Kesteven District Council and comparisons with other Local Authorities can be viewed via the following link:
- <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance>

#### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 No other options are considered other than to note the report.

#### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1 The report is for noting.

#### **6. Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix A – The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’s Annual Review Letter 2023-24